

Demons Of The Night

by Lilith the Queen

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Summary: Aliens aren't the only things in the woods...

1. Demons Of The Night, Part I

_Chupacabras can tell when there's a disturbance in the natural order of things. It's the same way that a good stockbroker can tell when Wall Street is fluctuating, or an engineer can tell when a machine isn't working right. Only it's not a product of the job; it's a product of the race. _

_Chupacabras aren't demons, or vampires, or monsters, or anything truly dark. We're nature spirits of the night, basically. The children Lilith had by Adam. _

_You know that story, don't you? I realize many of you may not.

_

_Yahweh (the Judeo-Christian god) created Lilith before he created Adam. Lilith was the real first woman, a guardian of nature. God then created Adam to be her mate. _

_Lilith and Adam had many children, but they looked like Lilith, not like Adam. Lilith had pale skin, black hair that was shaggy like a wolf's, and dark eyes. She looked perfect, like a goddess of night. Adam had dark skin, pale eyes, and red hair that was wiry. He looked more like an orangutan than a spirit. _

_Lilith's children were all spirits that guarded nature. They were beautiful, mortal spirits that were innocent in the way that Lilith was innocent: They knew the same things that came from eating the Apple, that God made later; but they took no shame in it. _

_Adam, on the other hand, did take shame in it. He did not understand the ways of nature, only of humans. He demanded that Lilith be subservient to him, like he thought was right. _

_When Lilith refused to be his slave, Adam complained to God, saying that Lilith was not doing what she was supposed to. God sent two of his angels to Adam and Lilith to try to straighten things out. One was named Lucifer; he was a nature spirit, like Lilith. One was named Eve; she was a human like Adam, and a temptress. She had golden hair, pink skin, and pale eyes. _

_Eve tempted Adam into eating an apple that she claimed would give him eternal life. Instead, it made him forget Lilith, and remember only Eve. Eve claimed that this was true, because she was willing to be a slave to Adam. She drove Lilith and Lucifer out of the garden, with Adam helping her, claiming that Lucifer had put a snake in the garden that bit her and drove her mad. _

_Lilith and Lucifer escaped to the night, where they had children. These were the succubim, which were the guardians of the realm of the mind. _

_Eve had had children with Lucifer, before God had sent them to make peace with Lilith and Adam. These children were tainted, twisted versions of Lilith's children. They were vampires and demons. They were the spirits that frightened humans into doing what they believed was God's will. _

This is not a story that a human made up. This is the metaphorical truth. It's the truth in the same way that the story of Za-Lavarne and Kai-Rashav is truth, in the minds of the Andalites. It means this: It didn't actually happen that way, but when people started to believe it, all the effects of it happening that way came together. It makes no difference whether anything really happened now; only the effects of it.

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TASCHA

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Call me Tascha. You could not pronounce my real name if you tried.

I am a chupacabra, one of the blessed spirits. I have pale skin, and long, dark red shaggy hair that feels like wolf hair. I have green eyes, dark red lips, and pointed teeth.

I have long fingernails, and pointed ears. I also have bat wings, which only some chupacabras have. I have a fairly human body, but claws for feet.

I live in the woods. There aren't many other chupacabras near where I live, so I'm on my own most of the time.

There are weirder creatures than chupacabras in the woods. There is, for example, an Andalite. And a boy that is a hawk.

The Andalite isn't too interesting. But that boy

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TOBIAS

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It was the middle of the night, and I couldn't sleep.

Something weird had been going on in the woods. During the day, I could have sworn that someone was watching me. And during the night, I had been hearing someone singing.

I heard a rustle in the leaves. Ax? I called softly. That you?

"No," hissed someone.

I looked behind me. Nothing there.

Something pounced on me from in front. It knocked me off of the branch I was sitting on and pinned me to the ground.

"Morph," it breathed to me.

What?

"Just morph." It leaned over me menacingly.

I morphed into my human body. As I changed, I realized what was pinning me to the ground.

It was a woman. She was completely naked, and amazingly beautiful.

Her skin shone white in the moonlight. She leered at me, panting.

"Stand up," she ordered me, getting off of me.

I stood up. "Who are you?"

"Call me Tascha," she said. She stared at me for a moment, then made a slashing motion with her hands. I realized too late that I was completely naked.

"What are you, little boy?" she asked.

"Uhmy name's Tobias," I said.

She shook her head. "I don't want your name. I want to know what you are."

"I'm a human," I said. "Sort of. I'm part Andalite, part human, part hawk. Happy now?"

She nodded. "I am a chupacabra, one of the blessed few."

"What do you want with me?" I asked.

She smiled. "You are at the perfect age. The age where boys are beginning to taste the apple, but know not what it is they taste. Perfect."

I was having trouble trying to understand what she was saying. "Look, just tell me what you want, okay?"

She grinned slowly, revealing her sharp teeth. "You."

2. Demons Of The Night, Part II

> <meta name="ProgId"> TASCHA

TASCHA

I stared at Tobias, looking into his eyes. "I need something from you," I told him.

Tobias shuddered and turned away. "Take it," he whispered.

I threw my head back and laughed, cackling at the foolishness of humans. "You don't even know what I want!"

Tobias looked back at me, his hair falling over his eyes. "I think I know."

I grinned, showing my teeth. "All humans think they know what demons want."

"Yeah, my soul, right?" Tobias said. "Or, failing that, my virginity."

"Close enough." I stood up. Tobias cringed, as if he expected me to bite him or something.

I stooped down and brought my face close to his, my claws on his arms, so he could not move. "Do you have a lover?"

Tobias squirmed. "Wellâ€|no. Not really."

"Not really," I repeated. "There is someone, then. Someone who you want for a lover, but who does not care for you."

Tobias shook his head. "That isn't it. She cares for me, but we're just too young."

"There is no such thing as too young, once you have come into the world," I whispered. "There is no such thing as sexual innocence. Little girls and boys tease each other, seduce each other without knowing it."

Tobias closed his eyes. "I know. Look, please just take what you want."

I released him, standing up. "Come fly with me."

TOBIAS

Tascha had been gripping my arms pretty hard, hurting me with her talons. She stood up, and I suddenly felt as though I was floating.

She stood there in the moonlight, looking scary and beautiful. "Come fly with me," she whispered, extending one of her hands.

I got up, taking a tentative step in her direction. "What, you can

morph?"

Tascha threw her head back and laughed. It was a strange laugh. "I have wings, do I not? You may morph, if you have to. I do not find it necessary."

She unfolded her wings. They were huge, rusty-red batwings.

Tascha grinned at me. "Are you coming?"

I concentrated, and morphed. While I was morphing, I could actually feel Tascha watching me with curiosity.

"Impressive," she said.

I flapped my wings a few times. Aren't I fabulous?

Tascha nodded. "That you are."

Tascha reached up and grabbed two tree branches. She hauled herself up, climbing through the trees. When she reached the top of the tree, silhouetted against the moonlight, she let go and sort of ~~of~~ wafted into the air. I can't really describe it, except to say that it was the sexiest thing I had ever seen and is likely to remain that way.

We flew for a long time. Tascha didn't really fly; she sort of danced in the air. She was laughing and shrieking like a child. I was getting pretty crazy myself, getting drunk on the night.

3. Demons Of The Night, Part III

> <meta name="ProgId"> TASCHA

TASCHA

The penalty for trysting with humans is mortality. Simply put, you become human for as long as the human you were with is alive, and you become theirs. You belong to them. Need I spell it out?

So it was with very little surprise that I found myself, the next morning, lying in a bed.

This wasn't the first time it had happened, but it was still disconcerting. I sat up and took stock of my surroundings.

It was a small, dingy room. There were tattered posters of actors on the wall, and a warped wood dresser, with clothes spilling out of it. The ceiling slanted, and there was a water stain on the ceiling.

I suddenly realized that not only was I naked, I didn't have my wings. That was unfortunate.

I sighed and wriggled out from under the covers. "This sucks."

I went over to the dresser and investigated. There were, of course, no girl's clothes, but I managed to assemble a nice outfit of cutoff jeans and a baggy black T-shirt, no underwear or bra. (I didn't like the idea of wearing boy's underwear, and of course there weren't any

bras.)

I went downstairs, where there was a fat man, staring at a flickering television set, and drinking from a can of beer.

I stopped short in the middle of the kitchen. He didn't seem to notice me.

"Sir?" I called. "Uh—are you awake?"

The man raised his head. He had a thin layer of gray hair, and a stained white undershirt. He looked as though he used to be handsome, but had slowly mutated into a sloppy couch potato over the years.

"Yeah," he said. "Who the hell are you?"

"Who the hell do you think I am?" I asked him.

The man snorted. "One of Tobias's little girlfriends, likely as not. So he's here again?"

I shrugged. "How the hell should I know?"

The man grinned. "Well, you and him fucked last night, didn't you?"

I blinked. "How the fuck do you know?"

The man sighed. "I got ears, girlie. You know, nobody's called me 'Sir' since I was in the Navy."

"You're Navy?" I said.

"Navy all over," the man said. "Now get outta here. Shouldn't you be in school?"

I left.

TOBIAS

I decided to never, ever tell anyone about the night before. That was definitely the weirdest thing ever to happen to me.

Ax didn't notice. We met, exchanged pleasantries, and then Ax went to do his ritual and I went out to hunt.

While I sat on a branch, ripping apart a dead mouse, I thought about Tascha. She seemed like such a predator, like me.

Yeah, we were a perfect match for each other. A child of Satan or something, and a hawk that's actually human.

I tried out the scenario in my mind. Tascha instead of Rachel—

Tascha would live in the woods with me, instead of having to visit me every day. Tascha would hunt with me, instead of politely not watching while I ate. Tascha would fly with me for hours, never worrying about time limits. Tascha would accept me for who I am, in

my strange predicament, instead of having to make a choice between the human world and the animal world.

But how would Rachel take it?

4. Demons Of The Night, Part IV

> <meta name="ProgId"> TASCHA

TASCHA

I wandered around town aimlessly for a time, wondering what I would do now. The last time this happened, about thirty years ago, I was in London. I was known, for the duration of my short lifetime, as a pretty bad girl. I did all sorts of drugs, had my own motorcycleâ€¦I wasn't promiscuous, though. I couldn't be.

My thoughts drifted back to those days, so dangerous and humanâ€¦my mate, Robert, and I, snuggling in a seedy motelâ€¦speeding around on my motorbike on the East End, playing tag with copsâ€¦throwing bricks in the windows of huge office buildingsâ€¦oh yes, and Robert dying in a burst of gunfire, bullets from the gun of a policemanâ€¦me bending over him, weeping, begging him to stay aliveâ€¦trying to dig the bullet out of his headâ€¦I watched him die.

I mentally shook myself. That was a long time ago, longer than some humans had lived. "Get a grip, Tascha," I muttered to myself. "Find Tobias. Everything will become clear after that."

TOBIAS

After what passed for breakfast, I started looking for Tascha. I hadn't seen her, which was hardly surprising. I figured she must sleep during the day.

After an hour of fruitless searching, I wondered if she was invisible or something. Even with my excellent hawk vision, I hadn't been able to spot her. The only weird thing I had seen was a brown patch of grass where we had been the previous night.

I went back to my branch and brooded. God, Tascha, where are you?

I wondered whether it had even happened. Maybe I had dreamed the whole thing, and Tascha didn't even exist.

After a while, I got a little more paranoid. Maybe, I thought, it was just a one-night stand, and Tascha had gone on to some other sucker. Maybe I was tainted from trysting with her. Maybe I was doomed toâ€¦toâ€¦something, anyways.

I didn't realize that I had been thinking out loud until a voice behind me said, "Doomed to what?"

Tascha? I yelped, turning around. She had come back!

It was Rachel. She was standing in a clump of Queen Anne's lace, with her arms crossed. Her hair was tangled, and the sun shone on it, making a halo around her head. She was wearing her black leotard. She looked like an angel.

But I had been looking for a devil.

5. Demons Of The Night, Part V

> <meta name="ProgId"> TOBIAS

TOBIAS

Rachel cocked her head. "Who's Tascha?" she asked me.

"Umâ€|" I said. "No one."

"Then why did you say her name?" Rachel demanded.

"Iâ€|" A sudden burst of inspiration hit me. "She was a cousin of mine that I was thinking about," I said.

Rachel squinted. I couldn't blame her for being suspicious. "Fine," she said finally.

I sighed with relief.

Rachel whipped around. "What's that rustling?"

TASCHA

I pushed into the woods, listening hard. I had known every leaf of every tree in this forest, previously. But that was by night, and that was when I was a chupacabra. I was a human now, and utterly unfamiliar with nature.

I thought I heard Tobias's voice up ahead. "Tobias?" I called. "Are you there?"

I crept into a clearing. Tobias, in hawk form, was sitting on a branch, talking to a blonde-haired girl. My first thought was 'An angel! An enemy.' I mentally shook myself. She was only a human girl, nothing more.

I sat in the bushes, watching and listening.

Tobias morphed to human and descended from his branch. "It's nothing, Rachel," I heard him say. "Probably just a squirrel or something." He took her into his arms and kissed her. I watched in quiet fascination.

They kissed for a long time, before Tobias's hand went around to her back. Rachel pushed away from him.

"What are you doing?" she snapped.

Tobias was taken aback. "Iâ€|"

Rachel shook her head and sighed. "Tobias, what's wrong with you?"

Tobias sat on the ground. "Rachel, I have something to confess to you." He looked around, saw me in the bushes. His eyes widened.

Rachel sat down. "What is it, Tobias?"

Tobias shook his head. "Nothing."

Rachel narrowed her eyes. "It's not nothing. Who's Tascha?"

She looked to where Tobias was looking. "Oh. _I_ see."

Rachel leapt to her feet. She strode to where I was hiding, grabbed the collar of the shirt I was wearing, and dragged me out of the bushes. I hissed at her.

Rachel deposited me on the ground in front of Tobias. "You know this girl?"

I stared at Tobias. "Hello, my love."

TOBIAS

Tascha was crouched on the ground, where Rachel had dumped her. She was wearing one of my old T-shirts. I could tell she didn't have a bra on. Her damp hair was hanging over her face, and she looked amazingly sexy.

"Taschaâ€¦" I muttered. "How did you find me?"

Tascha looked up at me. "I thought you would be here," she said. "Is this your mate?"

Rachel glared at her. "I am his _girlfriend_," she said icily. "Who the hell are you?"

Tascha got up from the ground. "My name is Tascha," she said. "I am Tobias's."

"His what?" asked Rachel.

Tascha shrugged. "I am his. I belong to him. For now, at least."

Rachel looked at me, utterly confused. "What?"

I sighed. This was going to take a long time to work out.

6. Demons Of The Night, Part VI

> <meta name="ProgId"> TASCHA

TASCHA

I arranged myself on the ground. "Tobias and I have anâ€¦ understanding," I explained. "I have known him for my entire life, and I love him more than anything in this world. We knew each other a long time ago. When we parted, we both made a pact that we would find each other again, when our burdens became too much to bear. Obviously, Tobias's has not. But mine has." I sighed theatrically. "A very short time ago, my parentsâ€¦ left me. I had

nothing in the world, and had to borrow even my clothes from a stranger. I was on the road for weeks, begging rides and food. I was destitute. After an eternity of searching, I have found my one true love. You would not keep even him from me, would you?" I looked at Rachel pleadingly.

It's amazing how easy it is to lie in human form. My mother, Lilith, knows all and sees all. You can't lie before her. But for the most part, Lilith ignores the behavior of humans. I have gotten into the habit of not lying, but I can at least twist the truth.

Rachel softened a little. "Where did you know him from?" she asked.

I could see Tobias tense up. "From his aunt's house, across the country," I said. "We met when we were young."

And I haven't seen her for ages, Tobias added.

RACHEL

I didn't believe one word this bitch told me. From the moment I saw her, I knew Tascha was bad, bad news. I knew that she would take Tobias away from me if I let her.

I also knew that if I told Tobias what she really was, I'd lose him forever.

But there was something really interesting about Tascha. She made me feel like I hadn't since the very beginning of the Animorphs—wild and free, like I could do anything, beat anyone, and never get hurt. I wanted to fight her just to see if I'd win. I hadn't really wanted to fight since months ago.

"Do you have anywhere to sleep?" I asked her.

Tascha shook her head. "Nowhere but in the trees."

Tobias looked at me pleadingly. Rachel, you told me that your parents are going to be out for the weekend. Can she sleep in your house?

I looked at Tascha. She looked at me.

"Yes," I said. "She can."

It was a really, really bad idea.

TASCHA

That afternoon, Tobias introduced me to the rest of the Animorphs.

I smiled politely and said hi. They seemed to like me.

The boy that was introduced as Marco kept watching me throughout the entire meeting as the Animorphs determined my fate. Rachel and Cassie seemed to be fiercely opposed to letting me into the Animorphs. Jake and Tobias wanted to let me in.

While they were discussing me, Marco slid over to me and put his hand

on my leg.

"So," he asked me, "you're Tobias's new girlfriend?"

I nodded. "I suppose you could say that."

Marco grinned at me. "You know, he already has a girlfriend. But I don't."

"Are you trying to ask me to be your mate?" I asked him.

Marco shrugged. "I guess you could put it that way. But I think you're the sexiest girl I've ever laid eyes on."

I giggled. "It's very kind of you to say that."

"No," Marco whispered in my ear. "It's true." He leaned over to kiss me. I turned my head away so that he got a mouthful of my hair.

"Hey!" Marco protested.

I shrugged. "I belong to Tobias. Until he dies, I cannot be attached to anyone else."

Marco looked disappointed.

The other Animorphs dispersed. Jake looked me over.

"You're in the Animorphs," he said.

I smiled. "Terrific. When do I begin?"

JAKE

We got the blue cube out from its hiding place. I held it up, and everyone touched it.

Tascha took a deep breath and touched it. When she laid her hand on it, her eyes rolled up into her head and she collapsed.

Tobias rushed over to her and knelt by her side. "Tascha?"

Marco stared at her. "Oh my God."

Tascha's eyes fluttered. "What happened?" She sat up, cringing.

Cassie stared at her back. "What the hell happened?"

Tascha's hand went to her back. Two stubby little bat wings had sprouted out of her back, tearing two holes in her shirt.

Tascha grinned. "Wow." She stood up and stretched. The wings grew larger.

For a second, Tascha seemed like "I don't know, a devil or something. She grinned evilly, and her eyes glowed red. Then the wings disappeared, and she was a normal girl again.

Cassie regarded Tascha with great suspicion. Marco looked dumbfounded. Tobias didn't look surprised at all.

Rachel gawked at her. She turned to Tobias and muttered, "And this is a normal girl?"

Tobias looked flustered. Well, maybe she's allergic to morphing, like you were to that alligator morph.

Rachel glowered at him. "Tobias, this isn't anything normal at all."

End
file.